No. 696 Twopence October, 1961

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THE
UNITARIAN
A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

FILMSTRIPS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The photograph above is from a filmstrip about the Dead Sea Scrolls made by Educational Productions Limited, of Wakefield. It is a reproduction of one of the thirty-four excellent colour pictures that make up the filmstrip.

The value of this filmstrip is enhanced by the notes written by John M. Allegro, M.A. Mr. Allegro was one of the first in the field when the scrolls were discovered in 1947. His notes have the stamp of eye-witness reporting and do full justice to the dramatic story of the Arab shepherd boy, one of whose goats wandered amongst the caves where the boy chanced upon the library of scrolls that had been hidden for so many hundreds of years.

Between 1947 and 1956 over five hundred documents were found, among them fragments of scrolls going back to the third century B.C.

Mr. Allegro says: "Until 1947, our earliest Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament were of no earlier date than the ninth century, so that these new discoveries have thrown much light on the transmission of the Bible text throughout the intervening thousand years or more.

Yet, this has not proved the most important aspect of the Qumran scrolls: it was soon recognised that some of the sectarian works found in the caves show already some of the ideas, customs and hopes which re-appear later in the New Testament. The Dead Sea scrolls therefore, paint in for us more vividly than ever before the Jewish background of early Christianity and enable us better to appreciate its historical setting and relevance."

Educational Productions Ltd., produce many filmstrips useful for Sunday School and U.Y.P.L. work. Some very good ones appear, for example, in the series "The Geographical Background of the Bible" which illustrates the settings in which the events of the Old and New Testament occurred.

Details of new material from Educational Productions Ltd., are sent out from time to time by the R.E.Y.D., but for those who use filmstrips fairly regularly, or are thinking about so doing, there is a preview service whereby every few months the latest strips are sent to those interested. By this means the value of each filmstrip may be assessed before a decision is made as to whether or not to purchase it.

For those requiring more detailed information the full address of Educational Productions Ltd., is East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorkshire.

JERUSALEM

By Norman Blake

It was really intriguing trying to decide who was covering up what in all those G.A. meetings and debates and discussions.

My little children fret not yourselves, fret not yourselves either about derelict causes or about our lack of ministers. If a man has "fire" he will for ever be to the glory of our faith otherwise he is more usefully as well as gainfully employed teaching. The saints and prophets have always lived in poverty. In America I believe there is no little perturbation over the young men who come in to preach the beauty of poverty on an assured income. The spirit of free christianity will flourish and bring fourth fruit where-ever and within whomsoever is the Holy Spirit.

May it not be our technique that is at fault; is our aim the questing spirit of Unitarianism? Jesus when his time came, when his life and preaching could do no more "set his face steadfastly towards Jerusalem." It seems to me that the questing spirit can be well promoted, under the orthodox wing. Let it never again be said "But I am still a Unitarian I don't go anywhere." Infiltration and cell formation have an unpleasant flavour, but they are good psychology and both O.T. and N.T. are full of them. If then God can best be worshipped and served by a free conscience we should put first things first for ourselves and our children and WORSHIP. We believe in no mediator or saviour and so can afford least of all to let Sunday and the weekly "get together with the Father" go by the board. We must inculcate in ourselves and our children that Sunday is not Sunday without worship. If we feel out of the ordinary elated or depressed then we should worship twice.

If there is a Unitarian cause at hand worship with it, but worship somewhere and worship regularly, and join in week-night activities as if it were one of our own chapels, discussing and working as an avowed Unitarian, but without shouting from the housetops.

Sometimes a minibus might go some way to replace a minister. The congregation would meet at 10.30 and at 6 of a Sunday and travel to worship with a struggling cause Unitarian or otherwise. I know a parish church where the vicar and his wife and the organist were the evening congregation for Sunday after Sunday. The "implosion" of eight or ten singing Unitarians would, I am sure, have shaken the vicar's prejudices.

MIRACLES

by J. Martin Hall

We all know about the Good Samaritan. The number of those who know about the Grateful Samaritan is rather less. In the miracle of ten lepers healed, only one turned back to Jesus to give thanks ("and he fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks, and he was a Samaritan"). Goodness, of course, Jesus appreciated, but by this gratitude he was undoubtedly swept.

Recently a large and animated family came to tea. Naturally exuberant, they were just as naturally well-behaved throughout. When they later took the initiative (there was no noticeable prompting from mother) and came to shake us by the hand thanking us in their own individual way "for having us," they put the final touch to their charm. Their conquest was complete. We certainly were utterly swept.

Human behaviour can be a means of opening doors on to new worlds. By their manners, by their pens, by the truths for which unconsciously they are standing, people can open out dimensions which before we did not know to exist. It was said when you met Gladstone you were left with the impression that he was the most wonderful man you had ever met, but that when you met Disraeli you went away feeling what a wonderful person you were. This apparently small grace of gratitude can have the effect upon us of a meeting with Disraeli. Its presence introduces a new world. Those children made us feel so the other day.

Have you ever thought how there are two ways in which we can explain the marvellous word, "miracle"? One is that it is something outside us and against the usual order of nature, "event due to supernatural agency" (Oxford Dictionary). The other is that it is something happening to us, or in us, and is very much in accordance with the order of nature. It is this second view of miracle which has for me the great appeal. According to this view, the world is always wonderful, miraculous, but miracle is when some change of heart, some happening taking place in us, pulls the shutter apart and we see things as they are. The inculcation of gratitude in children by wise parents might well be a shutter of this sort.

In worship especially we have a new attitude, a gratitude within us for all we receive in life. This projects us into another world, the real world, in which living is refreshed. We are giving—in worship —"What Thou most desirest, our humble thankful hearts." It is our admission that the way of gratitude takes us to God.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Critic

"Adverts on TV.?" said Dad. "Well they're like adverts anywhere else—in newspapers, on hoardings—there are good and bad, with more of the latter. Some are clever and well organised; others are just awful! Take TV. as you've said: some of those voices selling us soap! Those dreadful lyrics that have to be sung! My sympathies are with the singers. They deserve their pay. But, anyway, you can always switch the thing off as a last resort.

"What you can't switch off and what are not so easy to avoid are the hoardings and there's one aspect that bothers me a lot. It bothers others, too, of course; and I think it's a bad move. It's this misuse of language, of the Queen's English. I don't know who dreamed up the one about "Drinka pinta milka day" but I, for one, wish he hadn't. The sentiment is fine and the way of putting it over is clever; but it's wrong. It's aimed as much at the children as the adults, but, either way, it's bad. There's enough bad spelling going the rounds these days, isn't there, Raymond?"

"Er—yes, Dad."

"Yes; you know, don't you? I don't know about a 40-odd letter alphabet; sometimes I think 26 must be too many. I see that we're also expected to drink milk in the "summa" and "winta"; and there's that little boy with the sweets, who says: "Wotalotigot!" I don't wonder teachers rise in wrath about this sort of thing. They're banging their heads against brick walls, aren't they, Raymond?"

"Yes, Dad."

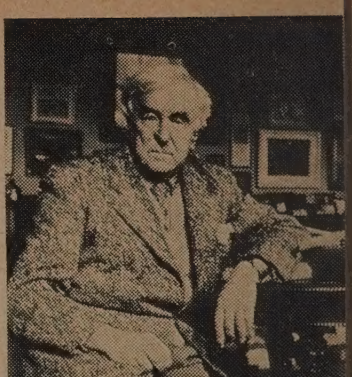
"I passed a cycle shop the other day which had a poster in the window. It read "Betta getta Vespa." It's enough to make you weep."

I see Dad's point, don't you? But I don't think I'll tell him about one I saw in a shop window down the road. The notice invites people to "CUMANAVALUK." I shouldn't like to be around if Dad spots that. But I do see his point.

AS I SEE IT

By H.J.

Do we really appreciate our heritage—the right to worship in Freedom according to our conscience? The ministers who suffered persecution, imprisonment and poverty because they would not conform to the prayer book won for us, by their sacrifices, our freedom in religious matters. Do we desire to preserve this precious heritage? We can only retain our religious freedom by constant vigilance and loyal support of our churches by regular attendance at the services. Have we become slaves to the television set or the motor car or do we make other innumerable excuses for not attending public worship, or is it just apathy? It is a very real tragedy when a church has to close its doors through lack of support and those who suffer most are the older members who have been connected with the church since childhood. Let us resolve to attend the services each week and also make some real personal sacrifice to maintain the church.



UNITARIAN STALWARTS

DONALD HUGHES

The Church up the road closed it doors for the last time as a place o worship and became a store-hous for the firm of Kodak. To tha "negative development" as he de scribes it, we owe the many happ years in which the congregation o Oakfield Road Unitarian Church Bristol, has enjoyed the uniqu quality of their friendship wit Donald Hughes—estate agent, artis poet, wit, and ex-chairman of th congregation.

Unbelievably soon to those wh know him well, Donald Hughes o May 31st, joined the ranks o Bristol's octogenarians; his yea may number four-score but h intense interest in everything aroun him and his keen awareness o beauty of sound, colour and form, i things and in people, keep him on of the "young in heart" whose pric is above rubies.

Though he has been successful i business, it is mainly through h reputation as a poet and artist tha he has come to be one of Bristol outstanding citizens; his fiat i

historical Berkeley Square in Clifton is full of water-colours, books and mementoes of his wide travels. His books of verses are grave and gay, ranging from intimate little lyrics addressed to small birds and flowers, to serious imaginative poems; to hear Donald Hughes recite his own verses is a rare delight indeed. All his life he has been a great humanist and tender sympathy for the sufferings of mankind runs through much of his poetry; through his gifts as an artist too he has offered help to those in need, as when several years ago Countess Mountbatten opened an exhibition of his paintings, the proceeds of their sale being donated to the Save the Children Fund.

It is characteristic of Donald Hughes that he has found pleasure in giving pleasure—and help—to others; his warmness of heart and ready wit have enlivened many a congregational meeting; his benevolence harmonised conflicting points of view and his closing remarks always left everyone's thoughts on an horizon of hope for the future; his courage when a tragic accident bereaved him of his wife was an inspiration. His stature as a man certainly enhances the public credit of the faith he holds and by which he lives.

NEWS AND VIEWS

OVERSEAS CHURCHES

The Rev. D. S. Harrington, of the Unitarian Church in New York, Community Church, has recently returned from a long visit to Africa. The following is his account of a visit to one of our churches on that continent:

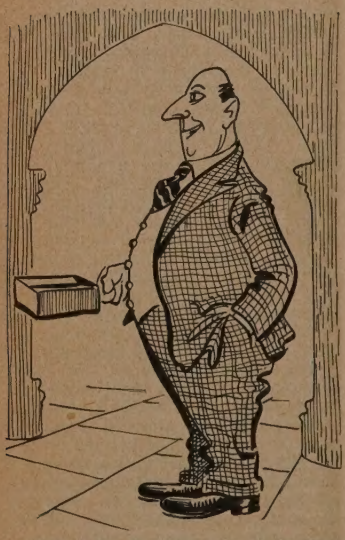
One of the highlights of our African adventure was a visit on Sunday morning to The Unitarian Brotherhood Church of Lagos, Nigeria. I had not before realised that we had a truly African Unitarian congregation in all Africa. But there it was, crowded right onto the corner of one of the busiest intersections of downtown Lagos, surrounded by its boisterous, bursting-at-every-seam African slum. The windows were wide open to catch every stray breeze in the intense heat, and also every blast of automobile horn as vehicles approached the blind corner. Through them came the lovely murmur of many voices passing in the streets and occasionally the cries of hawkers from the nearby markets.

Inside the church was neatly painted and clean, and soon after 9 a.m. the congregation began to gather. The women arrived first, many of them with babies sleeping on their backs. Then the men came drifting in, a few at a time. Slowly the little church filled. The Unitarian Minister, a giant of a man, well over six feet four and very solid, arrived with the congregation officers, several old and very wise-looking men and a handsome younger man, the Church Secretary. We introduced ourselves and were warmly greeted. When the Minister, Rev. Mr. Ademosu, opened the service he announced that this morning the service would be in English instead of the customary Yoruba in honour of visitors from America. I was asked to preach the sermon, which the Rev. Ademosu translated into Yoruba for the benefit of some of the women and children who did not yet have an adequate command of English to understand everything I said. I brought them all the greetings of our congregation in New York, and all of our American Unitarians, and told them how moved and heartened I was to find brother and sister Unitarians in the very heart of Africa, how sorry I was that we had not known earlier about them, and pledged to keep in close contact with them from now on.

The service was simple and very similar to our own. The hymns and basic ideas were identical with ours. The children's choir sang with great

enthusiasm. And at the end, the Minister asked that I take the affectionate greetings and good wishes from all present to our New York congregation and all their brother Unitarians in America.

The Lagos Unitarian Church was founded in 1918 as a result of pamphlets from some of the English Unitarians falling into the hands of some of the Yorubas in Lagos. The Church was built in 1925.



"Must try to encourage injections when we are celebrating the ejections."

HOME CHURCHES

President of the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire for 1961-2 is the Rev. Maurice Bonner, secretary of the Manchester District Association—fitting reward for the hard work by Mr. Bonner that played such a large part in making the G.A. meetings in Manchester such a success. The preacher in 1962 will be the Rev. Maurice Johnson.

The Anglo-American Youth Service at BUXTON in July (now an annual event) was attended this year by the Mayor and Mayoress of Buxton.

As an experiment the West Lancashire U.Y.P.L. regional committee is asking its constituent branches to produce the monthly news sheet "Spotlight" in turn. One by Horwich appeared in August. It was packed with interesting news; for example about the big jazz festival at Rivington Hall Barn. Two jazz bands played five hours of non-stop jazz. Profit from the festival was £30.

Eighteen cars and two scooters took nearly eighty people from Altrincham on a car rally via Cheshire and Derbyshire lanes to Great Hucklow, in July. £15 was raised towards £1,000 needed by the Chapel to comply with a local council order to make up the road at the side of the Parsonage and Schoolrooms.

The Rev. Edgar W. Hill, minister at KIDDERMINSTER, was given a very friendly reception at the local Parish Church in July when he spoke on the history of his Great Meeting House.

CHESTERFIELD'S Scout Troop's tandem recently featured in the "Derbyshire Times." As a result another tandem has been offered to the troop.

Led by "joint minister" Donald Mills a combined party of children from Dob Lane and Pendleton had an outing in July. Further outings are planned.

Decreased attendance has forced OLDHAM Sunday School to be closed. The few children remaining are to be encouraged to attend Chapel.

Mrs. Jean Cummings, of Montreal, Canada, spoke on "Women in the World of To-day," at an evening meeting at STOCKPORT in July, prior

o flying to Davos for the I.A.R.F. onference. After the service about hundred people attended a recep- on for Mrs. Cummings.

EDINBURGH has again had special vents in connection with the city's estival. The theme of the three pecial services was "Worship in oetry." These services centred pon Rabindranath Tagore, Gerard anley Hopkins, and D. H. awrence. Some of the Hopkins oems were read by Margaret Raw- ngs, who had appeared at the yceum the week before in the title ole in Lawrence Durrell's "Sappho." n the Church Hall there was an xhibition of paintings by Liverpool ockland children.

THE INQUIRER

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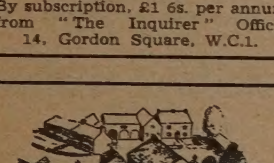

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UNITARIANS BELIEVE ...

That sincere worship leads people to discover their best ideals and to practise them in daily living.

That such sincerity requires each person to use thought and conscience to find their religious faith.

That theirs shall be a faith of seekers not bound to a particular creed, but learning wisdom and love from the best sources of all times and all peoples.

That experience reveals, behind the phenomena of the Universe, a Mystery so sublime and wonderful as to exceed human understanding. They recognise that every person must name this Mystery as their thought directs. Most people will call it "GOD."

That this God is a UNITY and not a mysterious complexity of three or four separate yet undivided persons—Father—Son—Holy Spirit —Mother of God.

That Jesus of Nazareth was not a miraculous incarnation of God born of a virgin without a human father. They seek to follow the spirit of the man Jesus rather than to worship a theological Christ and a mystical Saviour.

That the Bible is a collection of books of varying value, written over a long period of time, but which contain many insights and messages of sublime and enduring value. They do not regard the Bible as a supernatural revelation of God to mankind.

That there is no conflict between Science and Religion. They rely upon science and modern knowledge rather than the dogmatic teachings of the past.

That they have no moral right to try to convert non-Christians. They believe in co-operation between men of differing faiths who have tolerance and goodwill.

From the "North Wales Unitarian News."

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

An honours degree of M.A. has been conferred upon Miss Alice Foley, J.P., of Bank Street, Bolton. The degree recognised Miss Foley's service to the community as Secretary of the Bolton Weavers and Winders.

Mrs. Dorothy Greenhalgh, also of Bank Street, has been made a Justice of the Peace.

Miss Hilary Coates, daughter of the organist at Bath, gave a distinguished performance at a Bournemouth music competition, in July. In September she played the Greig Pianoforte Concerto with the Bath Youth Orchestra.

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